

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A method of cropping and synthesizing an image on a screen, comprising the steps of:

displaying a crop boundary with a reference point on an image to synthesize on said screen, upon selecting a template having at least a frame, said crop boundary having a corresponding shape to that of said frame of said selected template and being variable in size while keeping the same shape and being centered on said reference point;

moving said crop boundary on said screen through an operation device, to place said reference point of said crop boundary on an appropriate point of said image to synthesize;

displaying reference lines inside said crop boundary, to define an internal zone within said crop boundary, said internal zone having a predetermined proportion and a predetermined position relative to said crop boundary;

moving at least one of said reference lines on said screen through said operation device while keeping said reference point on said appropriate point of said displayed image, to adjust said internal zone to an appropriate portion of said displayed image, wherein said crop boundary is automatically enlarged or reduced in cooperation with the movement of said reference line, so as to keep said internal zone in the predetermined proportion and position relative to said crop boundary;

thereafter enlarging or reducing said crop boundary about said reference point, to bound an appropriate area of said image to synthesize;

cropping an image of said bounded area; and

pasting said cropped image in said frame of said template after enlarging or reducing said cropped image in accordance with the size of said frame of said template to produce a synthesized image.

2. (original): A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said reference point is located inside said crop boundary at a constant position relative to said crop boundary.

3. (original): A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said cropped image is automatically enlarged or reduced in accordance with the size of said frame of said selected template.

4. (canceled).

5. (currently amended): An image cropping method comprising the steps of:

displaying an image on said screen;

displaying a crop boundary with a reference point on said image on said screen, upon designating a frame size, said crop boundary having an equal aspect ratio to that of said designated frame size and being variable in size while keeping the same aspect ratio and being centered on said reference point;

displaying reference lines inside said crop boundary, to define an internal zone within said crop boundary, said internal zone having a predetermined proportion and a predetermined position relative to said crop boundary; and

moving said crop boundary on said screen through an operation device, to place a predetermined reference point of said crop boundary on an appropriate point of said image;

moving at least one of said reference lines on said screen through said operation device while keeping said reference point on said appropriate point of said displayed image, to adjust said internal zone to an appropriate portion of said displayed image, wherein said crop boundary is automatically enlarged or reduced in cooperation with the movement of said reference line, so as to keep said internal zone in the predetermined proportion and position relative to said crop boundary;

thereafter enlarging or reducing said crop boundary about said reference point, to bound an appropriate area of said image;

cropping an image of said bounded area; and

enlarging or reducing said cropped image in accordance with said frame size.

6. (original): An image cropping method comprising the steps of:

displaying an image on said screen;

displaying a crop boundary with a reference point on said image on said screen, upon designating a frame size, said crop boundary having an equal aspect ratio to that of said designated frame size and being variable in size while keeping the same aspect ratio and being centered on said reference point;

displaying reference lines inside said crop boundary, to define an internal zone within said crop boundary, said internal zone having a predetermined proportion and a predetermined position relative to said crop boundary;

moving said crop boundary together with said reference lines on said screen through an operation device, to place said reference point of said crop boundary on an appropriate point of said image;

moving at least one of said reference lines on said screen through said operation device while keeping said reference point on said appropriate point of said image to synthesize, to adjust said internal zone to a portion of said image;

enlarging or reducing said crop boundary about said reference point automatically in cooperation with the movement of said reference line, so as to keep said internal zone in the predetermined proportion and position relative to said crop boundary;

cropping an image of an area of said image that is bounded by said crop boundary; and enlarging or reducing said cropped image in accordance with said frame size.

7. (currently amended): An imaging apparatus comprising:

a template selecting device for selecting a template from among different kinds of templates;

a display device for displaying an image to synthesize and a crop boundary having a corresponding shape to that of a frame of said selected template;

an operation device for moving said crop boundary on said screen, to place a reference point of said crop boundary on an appropriate point of said image to synthesize, and for enlarging or reducing said crop boundary about said predetermined reference point while keeping said crop boundary in the same shape and keeping said reference point on said appropriate point of said image;

a cropping device for cropping an image from an area of said image to synthesize, said area being bounded by said crop boundary; and

an image synthesizing device for enlarging or reducing said cropped image in accordance with the size of said frame of said template, and thereafter pasting said cropped image in said frame of said template, to produce a synthesized image;

wherein said display device further displays reference lines inside said crop boundary, to define an internal zone within said crop boundary, said internal zone having a predetermined proportion and a predetermined position relative to said crop boundary; and wherein at least one of said reference lines may be moved on said screen through said operation device while keeping said reference point on said appropriate point of said image to synthesize, and said crop boundary is automatically enlarged or reduced in cooperation with the movement of said reference line, so as to keep said internal zone in the predetermined proportion and position to said crop boundary.

8. (canceled).

9. (original): An imaging apparatus as recited in claim 7, wherein said display device displays samples of said different kinds of templates on said screen in a small size before one of said templates is selected.

10. (original): An imaging apparatus as recited in claim 7, wherein said display device displays a plurality of images in a small size on said screen, among which said image to synthesize may be selected from and is displayed in a large size after being selected.

11. (original): An imaging apparatus as recited in claim 7, wherein said display device displays said synthesized image on said screen after said image synthesizing device completes pasting said cropped image in said frame of said template.

12. (original): An imaging apparatus as recited in claim 7, further comprising an image input device for inputting image data, and a printer for printing out said synthesized image.

13. (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the appropriate [[area]] point of said image corresponds to a region of interest selectable by a user.

14. (currently amended): The method of claim 5, wherein the appropriate [[area]] point of said image corresponds to a region of interest selectable by a user.

15. (currently amended): The method of claim 6, wherein the appropriate [[area]] point of said image corresponds to a region of interest selectable by a user.

16. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the appropriate [[area]] point of said image corresponds to a region of interest selectable by a user.

17. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 7, wherein each template includes plural image locations.

18. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the display device displays plural different images in the plural image locations of the selected template according to results of the image synthesizing device of pasted and cropped plural images.

19. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein moving said crop boundary comprises a user operation of the operation device.

20. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the cropped image maintains its original relative width to height ratio.

21. (previously presented): The method of claim 6, wherein the reference lines are movable with respect to locations of the image.

22. (previously presented): The method of claim 6, wherein the reference lines are formed to divide a single source image into sub-regions.

23. (new): A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

printing hard copies of said synthesized image;

wherein said synthesized image is displayed in a sub display area provided in said screen.

24. (new): An apparatus as recited in claim 7, wherein a image to be printed s displayed in a sub display area provided in said screen.

25. (new): A method as recited in claim 23, further comprising:

designating the number of said hard copies before printing said hard copies.

26. (new): An apparatus as recited in claim 24, wherein said display device displays an area where the number of hard copies of said image to be printed is specified.